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it appropriate to permit the amendment of a pleading, he or she may impose such conditions, by way of continuance of the hearing date or otherwise, as he or she considers necessary to assure a fair hearing.

[36 FR 11567, June 16, 1971, as amended at 38 FR 17217, June 29, 1973; 62 FR 66998, Dec. 23, 1997]

§ 954.9 Default.

If a publisher fails to appear at the hearing, the presiding officer may: (a) Dismiss the petition; (b) order the petitioner to show cause within 30 days from the date of the order why an order of dismissal should not be entered, and thereafter enter such order as the presiding officer deems to be appropriate. If the petition is dismissed by order of an Administrative Law Judge, the dismissal may be appealed to the Judicial Officer within 15 days from the date of the order.

§ 954.10 Intervention or other participation.

To intervene or otherwise participate in a proceeding, any person may file a timely application in accordance with § 954.8(a). A timely application is one which will not unduly delay the proceeding. The application shall state whom the potential intervenor represents, his or her interest, the extent to which he or she desires to participate, and the evidence he or she seeks to introduce. The presiding officer shall fix the time within which the parties shall answer the application. The presiding officer shall grant or deny the application on such terms and conditions as he or she deems appropriate. In so doing the presiding officer will consider, among other things, whether intervention or other participation is consistent with the timely and proper adjudication of the rights of the original parties.

[31 FR 5198, Mar. 31, 1966. Redesignated at 31 FR 16270, Dec. 20, 1966; 62 FR 66998, Dec. 23, 1997]

§ 954.11 Hearings.

Hearings are held at 2101 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22201–

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3078, or other locations designated by the presiding officer.

[63 FR 66050, Dec. 1, 1998]

§ 954.12 Change of place of hearing.

Not later than the date fixed for the filing of the answer, a party may file a request that a hearing be held to receive evidence in his or her behalf at a place other than that designated for hearing in the notice. He or she shall support his request with a statement setting forth:

(a) The evidence to be offered in such place;

(b) The names and addresses of the witnesses who will testify;

(c) The reasons why such evidence cannot be produced at Arlington, VA.

The presiding officer shall give consideration to the convenience and necessity of the parties and the relevancy of the evidence to be offered.

[36 FR 11567, June 16, 1971, as amended at 62 FR 66998, Dec. 23, 1997; 63 FR 66050, Dec. 1, 1998]

§ 954.13 Appearances.

(a) The General Counsel of the Postal Service or a member of his or her staff designated by him or her shall represent the authorized official.

(b) A publisher or intervenor may appear and be heard in person or by attorney. Attorneys may practice before the Postal Service in accordance with applicable rules issued by the Judicial Officer. See part 951 of this chapter.

(c) An attorney representing a publisher or intervenor shall file a written authorization from the publisher or intervenor before he or she may participate in the proceeding. The publisher or intervenor must promptly file a notice of change of attorneys.

(d) When a publisher or intervenor is represented by an authorized attorney all subsequent pleadings shall be served upon the attorney.

[36 FR 11567, June 16, 1971, as amended at 62 FR 66998, Dec. 23, 1997]

§ 954.14 Presiding officers.

(a) The Chief Administrative Law Judge shall assign each case to an Administrative Law Judge qualified in accordance with law to preside over the

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hearing. Such assignments shall be made, so far as practical, in rotation.

(b) The presiding officer shall have authority to:

(1) Administer oaths and affirmations;

(2) Examine witnesses;

(3) Rule upon matters of evidence and procedure;

(4) Order any pleading amended upon motion of a party at any time prior to the close of the hearing;

(5) Maintain discipline and decorum and exclude from the hearing any person acting in an indecorous manner;

(6) Require the filing of briefs on any matter upon which he or she is required to rule;

(7) Order prehearing conferences for the settlement or simplification of issues by consent of the parties;

(8) Order the proceeding reopened at any time prior to his or her decision for the receipt of additional evidence;

(9) Render an initial decision.

[36 FR 11567, June 16, 1971, as amended at 38 FR 17217, June 29, 1973; 38 FR 20263, July 30, 1973; 62 FR 66998, Dec. 23, 1997]

§ 954.15 Judicial Officer.

The Judicial Officer is authorized (a) to act as presiding officer at hearings and (b) to render a final Postal Service Decision for the Postmaster General. On appeal from an Initial Decision of an Administrative Law Judge, the Judicial Officer will consider the entire record including the initial decision and the exceptions to that decision. Before any final agency decision has been rendered, the Judicial Officer may order the hearing reopened for the presiding officer to take additional evidence.

§ 954.16 Procedure.

(a) *Evidence.* The general rules of evidence governing civil proceedings in matters not involving trial by jury in the courts of the United States apply. The rules may be relaxed to the extent that the presiding officer may deem proper to insure an adequate and fair hearing. The presiding officer may exclude irrelevant or repetitious evidence.

(b) *Subpoenas.* The Postal Service is not authorized to issue subpoenas.

(c) *Fees.* The Postal Service does not pay fees and expenses for witnesses of, or depositions requested by, the publisher or intervenor.

(d) *Depositions.* Depositions may be taken as follows:

(1) Not later than 5 days after the filing of the authorized official's answer, any party may file application with the presiding officer for the taking of testimony by deposition. In support of such application the applicant shall submit under oath or affirmation a statement setting out the reasons why such testimony should be taken by deposition, the time and the place, and the name and address of the witness whose deposition is desired, the subject matter of the testimony of each witness, its relevancy, and the name and address of the person before whom the deposition is to be taken.

(2) If the application is granted, the order for the taking of the deposition will specify the time and place thereof, the name of the witness, the person before whom the deposition is to be taken and any other necessary information.

(3) Each witness testifying upon deposition shall be duly sworn by the deposition officer and the adverse party shall have the right to cross-examine. The questions and answers together with all objections, shall be reduced to writing and, unless waived by stipulation of the parties, shall be read to and subscribed by the witness in the presence of the deposition officer who shall certify it in the usual form. The deposition officer shall file the testimony taken by deposition as directed in the order. All objections made at the time of examination shall be noted by the deposition officer and the evidence objected to shall be taken subject to the objections. In lieu of participating in the oral examination, a party may transmit written interrogatories to the deposition officer, who shall propound them to the witness and record the answers verbatim. Objections to relevancy or materiality of testimony, or to errors and irregularities occurring at the oral examination in the manner of taking the deposition, in the form of the questions or answers, in the oath or affirmation, or in the conduct of the parties and errors of any kind which might be obviated, cured or removed if